The Shilluk, owing to their geographical conditions, are more sedentary than the other Nilotic tribes, and there is no great transhumance as among the others. They also are more intent on cultivation, Dura (sorghum vulgare) being the chief crop. They use a shifting cultivation technique; a certain plot of land is cultivated from four to six years and then left for ten to twelve years. An agricultural authority (5) on the Soudan said that "cotton as a cash crop began in 1923. But the Shilluk as well as the other Nilotes, are poor cultivators. The biggest crop of cotton in a twenty year period was 760 tons of raw cotton, mainly from the Shilluk land. It was abandoned and Sesame began to take on importance because the country consumes a fairly large amount of sesame oil."

According to the latest census available there are about 80, 000 Shilluk.(6)

Anthropometrics

During my stay in the Shilluk land I have taken anthropometric measurements on forty persons - 34 men, 11 of whom are members of the Shilluk royal family, and 6 women, one of whom is also royal. The persons were all measured at Malakal Town, but they were from different parts of the Shillukland, covering the whole area from north to south. Naturally I have a greater percentage of people representing the central area, i.e. around Malakal, and the percentage decreases northwardly and southwardly. Here is a list of the villages and settlements to which my subjects belong:

Akurua, Nun, Fabin (Detwok district), Achop, Alel, Achag (north of Kodok), Kodok, Golbany, Lul, Nyingar, (near Lul) Padit (near eastern Ana), Melo, Bouky (n.w. Malakal), Opod-Butu (eastern bank), Pamath, Tharujok, Lango, Pokan, Nyin-yar, Burr, Tonga, Atar und Nyijok.

I have taken the following measurements following the points described and defined in "Notes and Queries in Anthropology." (7)
Head length and breadth , nose length and breadth, facial and upper facial heigths, stature and sitting heigth. On 8 of the men measured I recorded also the minimal frontal breadth and the bizygomatic breadth.

The tools I used were the sliding and spreading calibres, and the Anthropometer.

The results of my measurements are nearly identical with those of Professor Seligman (8) in both cephalic and facial indices and stature, but there is a considerable difference in the nasal index which I am not able to explain.

		C.I.	N.I.	F.I.	S.(cm)
"1"	Seligman (21)	71.3	93.9	83.2	177
	Riad (34)	71.6	85.5	84.5	177.2

From the distribution of the physical characters in different parts of the Shillukland - 12 of the men measured by us are from Gerr (northern Shilluk province), and 22 men are from Lauk (southern Shilluk province) - we got a very astonishing result; it revealed that the Shilluk are not a homogeneous people as far as cephalic index and stature are concerned.